

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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VOL. 2.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ANTIQUITY OF THE JEWS.

Sir—A writer under the signature of W., Brooklyn, July 20, 1827, in the *Christian and Literary Register*, of August 15, 1827, page 8, is pleased to give us a refutation of the assertion of Philo-Veritas, that there is no evidence of the Jews having existed as a nation till we hear of their subjugation by the Romans; and that Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch. W. doubts whether so much flippancy and arrogance as Philo-Veritas displays is worthy of a refutation. A page of confutation is worth a volume of abuse. I shall content myself, therefore, with conceding, that those epithets are very justly applied to me, if I do not prove beyond the shadow of a doubt, that Mr. W. has undoubtedly the best title to them. He has won them and he shall wear them.

W. cites and adopts the axiom of Huet, bishop of Avranches, (p. 18 of the Amsterdam edition of his *Demonstratis Evangelica*, 1780,) *that every book is genuine that was so esteemed by those who lived at the period in which it was written: an axiom that cannot be disputed by those who give any credit to historical evidence.* This is his first axiom in the translation of W.

His second axiom is, *Every history is true which relates events in the same manner as they are related by many cotemporary writers, or by writers who lived near to the time.*

Thus we know Cæsar's Commentaries are genuine, because they are so acknowledged by Cicero and Hirtius; by Strabo, Suetonius, Plutarch, and the ancient grammarians and historians who came after. So we know that the account given of Lewis XI. by Philip de Commines is true, for the facts were also told by his domestic, Matthew Attrebas, to John Sleidan, and he to others, until they have reached our own day. Nothing can be fairer than these rules of controversy: I accept them; and desire they may be applied on the present occasion.

The question then is, whether W., in corroboration of the Mosaic writings and accounts, has produced, as he professes and undertakes to do, the evidence of cotemporary writers, or of writers near to the time of Moses. Moses is supposed to have lived and written about 1500 years before the Christian era. As I do not know, from any credible evidence, that any such man ever existed, I take as authority the common and popular chronologies.

W., in pages 9, 10, 11, and 12, cites against Philo-Veritas, as conclusive, the following authorities, viz.:

Eusebius, who lived in the fourth century after Christ, and who died A. D. 340.

Tertullian, who died about 220 of our era.

Strabo, the geographer, cotemporary with Christ.

Justin, the abridger of Trogus Pompeius, A. D. 143.

Pliny, the elder, who died A. D. 79.

Tacitus, the historian, A. D. 99.

Juvenal, the poet, A. D. 128.

Longinus, the critic, A. D. 273.

Numenius, (I suppose the Pythagorean, of Apamea, whose works are not extant,) and who lived, I believe, about A. D. 200. He mentions Christ.

Chalcidius, of whom I can give no account, nor W. neither, for he cites, on this occasion, Berdeus, who wrote 1520.

Diodorus Siculus, cotemporary with Christ. Why need W. cite so common an author as Diodorus, from the Bibliotheca of Photius, who flourished A. D. 886?

Justin Martyr, A. D. 163. This faithful specimen of the whole race of fathers of the church, says (as W. quotes him) that most historians, poets, lawgivers, and philosophers of the Greeks mention Moses. He might as well have said that Baron Munchausen mentions him too. But let us see. Polemon, Appion of Posidon, Ptolemy, Mendesius, Hellanicus, Philocorus, Castor, Thallus, and Alexander Polyhistor. These are the poets, and lawgivers, alluded to by Justin Martyr! Not a sentence of the writings of these authors did W. ever behold, except perhaps Alexander Polyhistor, and I doubt even him. As to Ptolemy, if W. had known what he was writing about, he would have let us know which of the Ptolemies he alluded to. Where are these writers extant? I should be glad to know. Or were they so obscure that nothing is deemed worth preserving that they wrote? What evidence can the second hand, doubtful testimony of men whom nobody knows amount to? Who can show that any of these obscure names belonged to a poet, historian, philosopher, or lawgiver? Thus it is for a man to rest on second hand authorities, like W., who, however, knew no better. But, adds Justin Martyr, (I quote W.) what is well worth attention, "they received this account of Moses not from the Jews but from the Egyptian priests." Does Justin Martyr give any citations out of the works of these writers to prove this? None. Moreover, I say, without fear of contradiction by any man of competent learning, that there is not a book, or a fragment of a book, now extant, or that ever existed, so far as we know, written by an Egyptian author in the Egyptian language. Neither Young, nor Champollion, or Salt, or Le Fron, pretend that there is any such thing. Again, while these Egyptian impostors were persuading Herodotus to swallow their fables of an uninterrupted succession of priests for near 12,000 years, why did they not mention Moses? But why did not Mr. W. give us at once, instead of his own crude, meagre, and unlearned account, the learned but fallacious chapter of Huetius, (ch. 2, p. 73,) wherein *Probat^{ur} aliorum Scriptorum testimoniis γνησίου τοῦ librorum Μωσίου?* or, what was better still, an extract from Josephus contra App.? and we might then have had something to reply to, instead of the borrowed boldness

of W.'s defence. But if he thinks himself equal to the task of defending the ground he has assumed, let him show some signs of real research by a reference to original authors which he has himself read; for it is manifest to any man of learning, that he has made up his reply to me from second hand quotations of modern writers. The whole question of the existence of the Jews as a nation, is discussed in the profound and laborious style of research which distinguishes the first names among the German theologians, by Daniel Wyttenbach, in his *Opuscula*, vol. 2, p. 416, in the dissertation de Unitate Dei. Amsterdam, 1821. He there shows, that there is not an historic notice of the Jewish nation prior to the foundation of Alexandria. Nor is there, in fact, any notice of any of the books of the Jews, till the Septuagint translation, as it is called, was made at Alexandria.

Hence then it appears, that this notable critic and theologian, after pretending to cite with approbation the axiom of Huetius, offers, as authorities corroborative of Moses, writers who wrote *from 1500 to 1800 years after Moses!!!* And this man pretends to be a defender of Christianity and the Christian scriptures! *Non defensoribus istis tempus egit.* He puts me in mind of the Spanish proverb, "Heaven defend me from my friends; I will defend myself from my enemies."

PHILO-VERITAS.

P. S. Justin Martyr brought to my recollection his first author, Eusebius, who commences the 32d chapter of the 12th book of his *Preparatio Evangelica* thus: *οτι δεησει πωτε τω Ψευδει αντι φαρμακx χρησθαι επι οφελεια των δεομενων τε τοιxτε τροπx.* "How it may be lawful and fitting to use falsehood as a medicine; and for the benefit of those who require to be deceived." He justifies this by a reference not only to Plato, but by the example of the sacred writers of the Old Testament! He is not the only one of the fathers who lays down broadly the same doctrine, so convenient for the professors of pious frauds.

CHRONICLES COMPARED WITH THE PRECEDING BOOKS OF JEWISH HISTORY.

Sir—The first nine chapters of the book of Chronicles contain what may be considered a concise chronology of eminent names, both of individuals and families; occasionally interspersed with a few historical facts, in relation to the state and condition of the Jews at different periods. At the commencement of the tenth chapter, a more particular history is commenced and carried forward, beginning at the defeat and death of Saul by the Philistines.

For the benefit, therefore, of those who may not have made a critical examination and comparison of the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, I shall note those variances between these books that appeared to deserve consideration. The tenth chapter of Chronicles agrees verbatim with the last chapter of the first book of Samuel, except in the two last verses in Chronicles, which say "So Saul died for his transgressions, which he committed against the Lord," &c. But the next chapter in Samuel, which is the first chapter in the second book, is not to be found in Chronicles: and yet, as matter of history, it is by no means

unimportant, containing, as it does, the particulars of the last moments of the unfortunate Saul, as related to David, by a young man who had put the finishing stroke to his fate by Saul's own request.

Passing this chapter, the next in the second of Samuel, and the eleventh in Chronicles, are meant to record the same events ; but, the two accounts vary in very important points, Chronicles recording the fact, (if indeed there is any fact to be relied upon in the whole history,) that all Israel gathered themselves together and crowned David at Hebron, while the second chapter of the 2d of Samuel states, as explicitly, that the men of Judah alone came and made David king, only over the house of Judah ; and stating in the three succeeding chapters the hostility between the house of Saul and David, it goes fully into the circumstances, which finally, after a war of seven years and six months, resulted in David's becoming king over all Israel. But, in Chronicles we have no account of this hostility or of this result.

When we come to the fifth chapter of 2d Samuel, we find the same facts related, and in exactly the same words with the eleventh of Chronicles, in relation to the crowning of David at Hebron. From here the two respective chapters continue verbatim for six or eight verses ; after which, the Chronicles give a minute description of the mighty men and captains, together with the number of all David's forces ; from what tribes taken, &c. These matters, with a history of battles, occupy four chapters. But what is certainly very remarkable, these four chapters, ending with the fourteenth of Chronicles, contain, in the nine last verses, precisely the same account, in exactly the same words, with the nine last verses of the fifth chapter of 2d Samuel. The two histories now, as respects date alone, are respectively brought up alike in the last of the fifth chapter of 2d Samuel, and in the last of the fourteenth of 1st Chronicles. The last half of the sixth chapter of 2d Samuel, and the whole of the fifteenth of 1st Chronicles, now record the same events, and in some parts are made to do so in the same words ; which is a curious fact. But, in general, the relation in Chronicles is the most circumstantial. Although in these chapters, as in many others that have gone before them, there is the most unquestionable evidence, that one was copied from the other, yet, we find the order of the events strangely mixed and transposed, especially in the first of sixth Samuel. There we are told that the ark of the covenant was brought up in a new cart by David ; and that Uzzah was slain by God, because Uzzah out of a good intent took hold of the ark to prevent its falling ; for this, "God smote him that he died." This event seems to be related as of prior date in Chronicles. There is, however, another circumstance worthy of notice in the two histories of bringing up the ark of the covenant, as it is called. Chronicles, chapter 16th, says that David "said or sung" a psalm on this memorable occasion ; none of the shortest neither ; but this psalm is not to be found in Samuel's relation of the same circumstance. Passing by the chapter containing this psalm, we find both the seventh chapter of 2d Samuel, and the seventeenth chapter of Chronicles, recording the same dialogue between king David and Nathan the prophet, on the subject of *building God a house to dwell in* ; which, as the story goes, made such a strong impression on the prophet's mind, that it seems to have followed him even in his dreams. Leaving

this vision, or, if you will, not discussing the point, whether there is a difference in the origin of dreams sacred and dreams common; and still leaving that great question untouched, whether God needed a house to dwell in or not, it will be sufficient for us to notice, in these two chapters, the evidence they furnish of their having been taken, verbatim, one from the other; or at most with only that difference that different translators would be likely to make.

Chapter 8th of 2d Samuel, and chapter 18th of Chronicles, record the same events, and in exactly the same order; but here, as well as in many other places of these different records, numbers and dates seem to hold no kind of correspondence—thousands being frequently changed to hundreds; besides a change in the name of principal captains, and valiant men. It has been seen that the 8th of 2d Samuel, and 18th of Chronicles, were alike. But the 9th chapter of Samuel, and, which records David's solicitude to find a remnant of the house of Saul on whom he might exhibit his gracious regards; and his having found one in the person of Mephibosheth, a lame son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul; relates also that he made him partake at his own table; and that he restored to him the lands of his grandfather Saul. Nothing of all this is to be found in Chronicles. Proceeding on to the 10th of 2d Samuel, and the 19th of 1st Chronicles, we find events recorded exactly in the same order, and almost always in the same language. Here, also, will be found the substitution of hundreds for thousands, and of horsemen for footmen. Whatever means may be resorted to, in accounting for the difference in these two histories, the impression must be fixed on the mind, that one was originally *copied* from the other. The copyist either found the original manuscript defaced, and supplied the deficiencies from his own fancy, or from tradition; or, finding what did not suit his purpose, he changed it for what did. Or, perhaps, he took very general history, and made from it a history more extensively filled with incident of his own or traditional growth. One thing seems certain, that the copyist, compiler, or abridger, whoever he was, thought less of the necessity of fidelity in the Jewish history, than many among us who refer every thing in life to something in these writings of a corresponding nature. But, the historian of "*God's own particular people*," can claim no indulgence of this kind at our hands. Truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, should have been his motto. He should, at least, have exercised his office, even if God had had nothing to do in the matter, under that rigid regard to truth which modern historians and modern critics make indispensable.

Thus far, sir, I have perused, compared, and noted a small portion of that book, which, if taken only as a specimen of the rude condition of people for whom it unfolded an equally rude system of theology, is well deserving to be read; but which, when attempted to be palmed on mankind as unfolding the excellence and wisdom of God, deserves only our contempt. When I shall resume this labor, will depend on leisure; which, at this busy season of the husbandman, is not a thing of promise.

LOOKER-ON.

Athens, August 6, 1827.

TRIUMPH OF TRUTH. BY C. SCHULTZ.

Continued from page 89.

123. It is a fact, that every priest will show some respect or friendship for any rich hypocrite of some standing, who conceals his doubts and pays a dollar a year to such a priest.

124. It is a fact, that there is no priest who is not a friend to a union of church and state, if his own sect could be the favorite one.

125. It is a fact, that every priest is a friend to *penal* laws; otherwise your constitutions would not be violated by *penal* laws in favor of religion or Sunday.

126. It is a fact, that there is a union of church and state already in this country—as witness the laws relative to marriage in the south; and your ridiculous laws and proclamations for fasts and thanksgivings in the north; witness, also, the daily and childish mummary of prayers, in your legislative halls.

127. It is a fact, and perhaps, the most shocking of all, that every press in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America is in the vilest state of bondage to the priesthood that can be imagined. And in all this degradation, the American presses have sunk the lowest. Because, all the others are kept down by a military force; but the American editors have no such excuse, for they have *voluntarily* submitted to become the panders and panegyrists of your persecuting priesthoods! Not one has escaped from such a damnable contagion! Verily, I say unto you, that our negroes in Virginia enjoy more mental liberty than they. Who would not “rather be a dog and bay the moon, than such” an editor?

128. It is a fact, that if *one* more priest had had an intrigue with some pretty nun or proselyte, while the council of Nice was sitting, then the “Song of Solomon” would not have been the “Word of God;” but what it really is, the words of a sensualist!

129. It is a fact, that Martin Luther did not believe that the Revelations of St. John, or the Epistle of St. James, were “inspired” writings.

130. It is a fact, that *pious forgeries* have, in all ages, been one of the political engines of every church. And the forged accounts of Christ in Josephus, are melancholy proofs of the depravity of the Christian priests.

131. It is a fact, that Eusebius, one of the most credulous fathers of the church, is suspected of making that forgery in Josephus.

132. It is a fact, that there is equal cause for suspicion, that the similar brief accounts given of Christ, by Tacitus and Suetanas, are also pious forgeries, and, perhaps, by the same hand.

133. It is a fact, that if the existence of the Jews is a miracle, then the Hindoos are a greater.

134. It is a fact, that nothing but worldly self interest is the miracle which sustains the Jews. For, it is well known, that ever since the destruction of Jerusalem they have been fools enough to believe that the time of their restoration is nigh, and that each male child born to them may prove to be their prince or restorer to the land of their ancestors, when they are to be rewarded a thousand fold for all their faith and sufferings.

135. It is a fact, that all prophecies were written after the events had taken place, or the time interpolated in their writings; or written in the true Pythian style; that is, to suit any time.

136. It is a fact, that it is altogether impossible for man ever to arrive at the *truth* in religion, so long as they attend to interested teachers alone.

137. It is a fact, which must stare every priest in the face, that if the Bible is from God, all the powers of heaven, earth, and hell, cannot injure it; and every attempt or discussion against it must redound to the honor of God, and the triumph of his priests.

138. But, it is also a fact, that every priest is an enemy to every free and impartial discussion, and tremble at every attempt to inquire into their fat and lazy livings; thus proving, by their own conduct, that they are hypocrites, and dare not be tried by God, or a free press.

139. It is a fact, that all the ancients believed that the earth was flat, and its surface an extended plain; and the Bible fully proves, that this was the notion entertained by all the writers of the Bible; for it is continually referring to the "pillars" and "foundations" of the earth!

140. It is a fact, at least one of your "inspired" facts, that the devil took Christ upon a mountain, from whence he could see "all the kingdoms of the earth!" thus demonstrating, that this "Son of God" was quite as ignorant as his devil! for it is evident that both the teacher and scholar believed that the earth was flat, and that they could view the whole from a mountain!

141. It is a fact, that your God could find a *fiery chariot* to convey a humble imposter to heaven, but had none to bring his Son *from* the same place!

142. It is a fact, that the religion of Rome was introduced by the priestly seduction of the virgin Rhea Silva, who was honored with a "Son of God!"

143. It is a fact, that Miss Creusa, another virgin, through the kind paternity of the priests, brought forth another "Son of God," who was the founder of the religion of Greece!

144. It is a fact, that the Chinese virgin, mother of Fo-Hi, produced another "Son of God," for the same purpose!

145. It is a fact, that the Hindoo nymph Rohini was likewise honored with another priestly "Son of God!"

146. It is a fact, that a dozen more instances might be cited, of various other virgins producing their "Sons of God!"

It must, therefore, be self-evident to every impartial investigator of facts, that if God really intended to send a son on earth, it is impossible that he should be driven to the necessity of imitating the very suspicious mode adopted by the heathen gods, and their prostituted virgins and priests!

147. It is a fact, that the first accounts of Christianity are buried in deep and dark suspicions. For it cannot be proved that either Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John actually wrote the books which bear their names; or that they even were written within the first half century.

To be continued.

Mr. Editor—It gives me real satisfaction to send for another copy of the *Correspondent*; and this I do with the greater pleasure, that the work is highly appreciated by your subscribers in this city: nor can the labors of Philo-Veritas, Shultz, and, above all, your own, fail to excite a high interest. Indeed, your journal needs only to be read by an independent mind to be approved of; and many, who are not subscribers to it now, will undoubtedly regret, when too late, that they have not subscribed, and that, too, for the early numbers.

In the first volume, I wrote several articles, or rather rhapsodies. But if I possess one spark of genius, it is paralyzed by the labors of your able correspondents; and nothing but an ardent zeal can again stimulate my puny efforts. You know, Mr. Editor, that I have no interest in your publication but in common with your subscribers. Indeed, it has been rather a loss in a pecuniary way. I make this remark lest it should be thought that I praise the *Correspondent* from interested motives.

As this is a miscellaneous article, permit me to ask the question, which you will have the goodness to answer in your next number, If there is an *impartial* biography of Thomas Paine in existence? Such a work is much wanted, and I believe would have a good circulation.

Would it not add to the value of Mr. Shultz's "Facts" if reference was made to the authorities on which he grounds his "facts?" I hope he will excuse me when I tell him, that, for myself, I am satisfied; but feel confident, that many who have not yet broken the shackles of priestcraft, and who need only to see clearly to be convinced, might turn from "darkness to light," and from the power of superstition unto that of common sense.

Philadelphia, September, 1827.

JULIAN.

THE JEW AND THE CATHOLIC.

Mr. Editor—On the occasion of a public funeral, some time since, in the city of New York, all the clergymen of the city were invited to attend. There happened to be but one Jew and one catholic priest present, viz.: Mr. S. and father O'Brian, the younger; and, as the devil would have it, these two were classed together in the procession; the two extremes of all religious sects in this country; as far removed from each other as the north and south poles. This arrangement caused the displeasure of father O'B., and he expressed his disapprobation in very severe terms afterwards, saying, that if it were to take place again, he certainly would leave the procession. This came to the knowledge of Mr. S., and on another occasion, which occurred soon after, on the death of lieut. gov. Broome, he took a seat, previous to the procession, next to Mr. O'B., and stated to him what he had heard respecting the affair, which Mr. O'B. acknowledged, adding that he felt very indignant at the transaction, considering it a personal insult. Why, said Mr. S., do you know any thing against my moral character? No, answered Mr. O'B., but your ancestors killed my God, and I will never forgive one of the race. Mr. S. coolly replied, that he might do the same to his God, if he could; he should never be angry with him for it.

There is a great deal of point and meaning in this reply of Mr. S., to those who are capable of perceiving it. The very supposition that God, the Creator of the world, could be put to death by mortals, must strike those who think at all for themselves with horror; and nothing but the renunciation of reason and common sense could have enabled priestcraft to palm this absurd and monstrous fable on any portion of the human family.

A. B.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1827.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Observance of Sunday. By the Secretary.

Continued from page 109.

An intelligent Frenchman has placed the idea of God resting or reposing after his labor in a most ludicrous point of view. Admitting, he says, that the Almighty really found himself so much exhausted by the six days' creation, as to require rest on the seventh, "What did he do on the eighth and the following day. Did he work, or did he rest? Do you answer, that he continued to repose, and still reposes? According to that account, in order perfectly to resemble that God of constancy or consistency, it would be necessary that man, after having labored six days, should consecrate the remainder of his life to repose. Do you assert, that God still works? At what, then, does he work? At preserving what he has created? Take care that a shocking inconsistency does not escape your mouth; for, according to your own assertions, there would have been one day, at least, in which God neither created nor preserved; and, notwithstanding, on that day the world must have existed without him. It would then be possible that it should always have existed in the same manner."

If it can be shown, as I am confident it can, that Christianity has no other foundation for its doctrine of a Sabbath, than the questionable authority derived from the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy, on what pretence is it that its priests arrogate to themselves the right of denouncing those who cannot admit the defective evidence which these books present? Even if some portion of mankind were willing to take the Jews as an example in this instance, is it to be endured that our citizens are to be deprived of their rights, because they refuse to give implicit credit to every thing contained in what are called the sacred books of that people? It requires but a very slight examination to be satisfied that these writings have been palmed on the Jews as authentic, by those who fabricated them, or were accessory to the deception. There are many intelligent individuals belonging to that nation who are now aware of this, and not ashamed to acknowledge the fact, although their peculiar situation might be expected to render them extremely reserved on such topics. But, for those professing a religion so opposite, and who are not always careful to conceal the hatred they entertain for the persecuted descendants of Israel—for such men to cling to the very objectionable books belonging to that hated and proscribed people, as the only authority they

have for observing a Sabbath, no other apology can be found than in that bigotry, the offspring of ignorance, which it is the constant study of the priesthood to instil into the human mind.

But, supposing the authority in question was unobjectionable on the ground of policy or expediency, it is evident from the whole tenor of the Old Testament, that the observances required of the Jews on the seventh day had no relation to any thing *spiritual*. The requisition to "remember the Sabbath" respected a suspension from bodily labor only, in which the cattle employed in husbandry or other purposes were included. The word Sabbath, or, as the Jews pronounce it, *Sabbat*, literally means *rest*; that is, a cessation from labor. The worship of God, whatever may be said to the contrary, was not the real object of its institution. Some writers have traced its origin to the Egyptian legislators, who, pitying the condition of the poor Jews, who were compelled to work without intermission, wished, by means of the institution, to insure to them a day of relaxation, of which their masters could not deprive them. It was this circumstance that suggested to the Jewish legislator, after their departure from Egypt, the appointment of a similar day of rest, which, as I have already shown, was, before that time, unknown to them or their predecessors.

It was on account of this peculiarity that the Jews were distinguished among other nations by the name of *Sabbatarians*—a name used by the Greek and Roman historians and poets, sometimes as a reproach, and sometimes to point the Hebrews out from all other people. They were considered as a distinct race on account of the observance of the Sabbath, in which no other nation resembled them. The Egyptians and Idumeans, like the Israelites, practised circumcision, but the latter only kept the Sabbath, or abstained from work on that day. On the supposition, then, that the Old Testament is admissible as authority for observing one day out of seven, it is perfectly obvious that it in no way sanctions the dogmas of those who declaim against every one that does not adopt their gloomy and puritanical notions respecting that day. We have all, doubtless, heard of the law of Connecticut which says, that "No person shall *run*, on a Sabbath day, nor *walk* in his garden, nor *elsewhere*, but reverently to and from meeting." The fanatics who framed this law forgot, when they published it, what their own sacred books tell them—that God dwells not in temples made with hands, and that the earth is full of his glory. "One of the finest scenes, (observes an intelligent writer,) and subjects of religious contemplation, is to walk into the woods and fields, and survey the works of Nature. The wide expanse of heaven—the earth covered with verdure—the lofty forest—the waving corn—the magnificent roll of mighty rivers—and the murmuring of the pebbled brooks—are scenes that inspire the mind with delight. But this the gloomy Sabbatarian must not contemplate. Entombed within the walls of his dwelling, he shuts from his view the temple of Nature. The sun shines no joy to him. The gladdening voice of nature calls on him in vain. He is deaf, dumb, and blind, to every thing around him. Whence could come this miserable notion of devotion? It comes from the gloominess of the Christian's creed, who sees a God only in terror, sits brooding over scenes of hell and damnation, and can have no joy in beholding the glorious

scenes of Nature. Nothing in that wonderful and stupendous volume accords with his principles. He can perceive nothing there that tells him that an Almighty power created millions on purpose to be damned, and that children of a span long are born to burn for ever in hell. Every thing, on the contrary, reproaches him with his unjust ideas, and disowns the hardness and ingratitude of his principles. He, therefore, shuns the sight of them on a Sabbath day."

But taking up the matter as viewed with the jaundiced eyes of superstition, I would ask the Sabbatizing Christian why he does not observe the day originally appointed as a Sabbath, but another day for which he can produce no authority whatever in any part of the Bible? It was the *seventh* day which the Jews were commanded to observe, throughout all generations, as a Sabbath, and those who performed any servile work on that day were subject to the penalty of death. How is it then that Christians can excuse themselves, not only for neglecting the day altogether, but for performing all kinds of labor on that day, and compelling those in their employment to follow their example? They will, probably, answer, that the Jewish dispensation has been superseded by the Christian, and that the founder of the latter religion showed by his example, that he intended the seventh day Sabbath should be abolished. Although I have doubts as to the correctness of this reasoning, even supposing the New Testament books to be authentic, I would still ask, by what authority it is, after Jesus abrogated the Jewish Sabbath, that his followers now observe a different day of the week, which they call the *Christian Sabbath*? It is nowhere said that the founder of Christianity gave any instructions as to such a day. It is not stated in any of the gospels or epistles, that a day was set apart by the first Christians to be observed as their Sabbath; nor does any thing appear from ecclesiastical history to warrant the belief that, during the three first centuries of our present era, it was the practice among Christians to assemble together on any particular day for religious worship.

The fact is, and those who are most interested in concealing the truth know it, that there is no authority existing which has even the semblance of being divine, for what is now called the Christian Sabbath. It was the monster Constantine, instigated, doubtless, by the priests, who established the observance of the day on which we are now met together; not in imitation of the Jewish Sabbath, but to celebrate the pagan mysteries, established in honor of the Sun. The decree by which this was effected is as follows: "Let all the judges and town people, and the occupations of all trades, rest *on the venerable day of the Sun*. But let those who are situated in the country freely and at full liberty attend to the business of agriculture, because it often happens that no other day is so fit for sowing corn and planting vines, lest, the critical moment let slip, men should lose the commodities granted them by the providence of heaven."

Thus it is that Christians, who owe the fundamental doctrines of their religion to a bloodthirsty, unprincipled emperor, are also indebted to the same sovereign for the mandate, which compelled them to assemble on the first day of the week for religious worship in the temple dedicated to the worship of the Sun. Such is the authority, and the only authority that can be offered for the strict pharisaical observance of a day,

which is inconsiderately called the "Lord's day." And for not regarding it as of greater importance than any other day, the priests of Christianity would ruin here, and doom to everlasting punishment hereafter, millions of intelligent human beings. I admit there are some Christian professors who entertain more rational opinions on this subject. Indeed, from the time of Constantine, the temper and spirit with which the Sabbath has been solemnized, at different times has been as various as the changes in our climate, and frequently attended with as baneful consequences—fluctuating from the sternest self mortification, and the most inexorable rigor, to the opposite extreme of improvident and licentious hilarity. "The old puritan who refused to *brew on a Saturday*, lest his *beer should work on a Sunday*, was scarcely more ridiculous than the sceptical Le Sage of Geneva, who, being anxious to ascertain whether the Author of Nature still prescribed to himself the observance of the original day of rest, measured, with the nicest exactitude, the daily increase of a plant, to ascertain whether it would cease growing on the Sabbath; and finding that it did not, of course decided for the negative."

By a statute of king Charles I. of England, it was ordered that "no persons should assemble, on the Lord's day, out of their parishes, for any sport whatsoever; nor in their parishes shall use any bull or bear baiting, interludes, plays, or other unlawful exercises or pastimes—on pain that every offender shall pay three shillings and four pence to the poor." King James, on the other hand, was graciously pleased to declare, "that, for his subjects' recreation, his majesty's pleasure was, that after the end of divine service they should not be disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawful recreations—such as dancing either of men or women, archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other harmless recreations; nor having of Maygames, Whitsunalls, or Morrice dancing, or setting up of Maypoles, or other sports therewith used, so as the same may be had in due and convenient time, without impediment or let of divine service."

Here, then, are two "anointed of the Lord"—both of them "heads of the church"—issuing decrees in *direct opposition* to each other, as to the observance of a day which, fanaticism exclaims, can only be observed in *one particular way*, to obtain the favor of God. The one prohibits all kinds of sports and recreations on Sunday; the other not only permits, but encourages them. No wonder that the *pious* people of England entertain conflicting ideas on this subject, when their rulers—when those whom they are taught to regard as the vicegerents of heaven should have promulgated such opposite laws for the government of their subjects. No wonder that, with these conflicting ordinances staring them in the face, we should find on Sunday, in some parts of the city of London, the houses shut up—the streets deserted and silent, forming a sepulchral contrast to the ordinary bustle; while, in other parts, the sounds of festivity and of mirth—the crowded tea gardens—the numerous water excursions—the public roads thronged with pedestrians and equestrians—all indicate the prevalence of feelings in direct opposition to those entertained by the puritanical, church going part of the community. If any evidence was wanting to show the uncertainty of those regulations prescribed by religion for the guidance of its votaries, it would be found in the very dif-

ferent manner in which the people of England, who all profess to be Christians, conform to an institution that forms so marked a feature in the national character. But the fact is, there is no want of instances of this uncertainty. The whole system is filled with them. From the beginning to the end of the books which form the basis of this system, we meet with nothing but contradictions, and anachronisms calculated to confound, bewilder, and baffle all attempts to ascertain what the authors of them mean. If in one place we think we have discovered the intentions of the writer, we have only to turn the page to find that we have been deceived. If our researches should lead us to conclude that we had certainly ascertained that the truth or correctness of some particular doctrine had been taught by the apostle Paul, we have only to read what Peter says, to be convinced that our first impressions were erroneous. We are thus, in the perusal of the Bible, driven from one fine spun theory to another, until we are actually lost in the mazes of uncertainty. Even the priesthood, who claim the exclusive right of being the interpreters of the scriptures, and the organs of the will of heaven, have always been wrangling, disputing, and exciting discord and carnage among nations, about the true meaning of the "sacred text," without, to this hour, being able to say what that meaning is. If these ambassadors of heaven have been unable to reconcile the inconsistencies, absurdities and contradictions, of the Bible, what else could be expected than that the sovereigns of the earth, who, after all, are but mere puppets in the hands of the priests, should entertain opposite views as to the nature of those observances which constitute a proper solemnization of the Sabbath day.

Although the constitution of the United States recognizes no authority by which one day can be commanded to be kept as more holy than another day, yet, in this state, and through the influence of the priesthood, a law was passed by the legislature, on the 5th day of March, 1813, entitled "An act for suppressing immorality," which, at this moment, stands unrepealed in our statute book, and which contains prohibitions, pains, and penalties as to the observance of the Sabbath that are without a parallel even in the far famed blue laws of Connecticut. The execution of this unconstitutional law was undertaken by a few fanatics in this city, who derived a moiety of the fine imposed for every breach of it. For some time, various sums of money were extorted from hair dressers, and other industrious mechanics, whose limited means compelled them to employ every part of their time in endeavoring to obtain subsistence for their families. But the operation of the law was at last so intolerable—so repugnant to the habits and common sense of the people, that, although no one could be found possessing sufficient courage to move its repeal, it became, in a short time, almost a dead letter. Not but that frequent attempts have been made to revive its obnoxious provisions, particularly as relates to the sailing of steamboats on Sunday. But these attempts have always been successfully resisted. That fanaticism, however, should be allowed to possess the means of attempting, at pleasure, and under the sanction, too, of legislative authority, to carry into operation a measure so injurious to public happiness, is certainly a most disgraceful circumstance, and calls loudly for the united reprehensions of a free people.

A few days ago, a very silly article, entitled "*Infidelity*," appeared in a morning paper, published in this city; so silly, indeed, that, although a correspondent was at the trouble of cutting it out and sending it to us, we did not consider it deserving of even a passing remark. Nor would we have now noticed the thing, had it not been alluded to in the *National Advocate* in a way that appears to merit some attention. The editor of that paper expresses himself as follows in his last Wednesday's number:

"A morning paper says—'Last Saturday, we lost a subscriber in consequence of an editorial article against infidelity; and not only that, but we got a terrible scolding in the bargain, for supporting the Christian Religion.'

"In a Christian country it is somewhat curious to be called to an account for defending the *religion of the land*. While it is wise, and according to "the eternal fitness of things," to leave all men in this happy land to embrace whatever religious opinions they please, answerable only to their Maker, we cannot but regard it as a proof among us, not only of extreme folly, but intolerable impudence, for any one to call in question the right of another to promote or defend the cause of Christianity. An infidel, like any other man, has a right to stop his paper if his creed is attacked; and by the same rule, if he were to assail in turn the publisher's creed, we cannot see why he also should not have his *paper* stopped."

The principle that every one has "*a right*" to stop a paper whenever its editor advanced opinions disagreeable to his readers, or whether he did so or not, is so obvious, that we should not have supposed it possible any one pretending to a grain of common sense would venture to question it, had we not learned from the above extract that this had actually been done in the instance alluded to. We regret, however, that any person entertaining liberal principles should have thought it expedient to exercise this "*right*" in a case where the article complained of was so palpably ridiculous. It evidently flowed from a mind imbued with superstition, or from one that wished to court popularity by administering to the depraved taste of those who prefer slander to truth, and ribaldry to sound argument. In all such cases, we consider it the most dignified course to wave our "*rights*," even at the expense of our feelings. We pity the aggressor, because we believe that had his mind not been darkened by the errors of education, he would have been incapable of denying to others that right to think, and to express their thoughts, which he claims for himself.

The editor of the *National Advocate* goes on to say, "It has, in fact, become mighty fashionable to put 'the screws' on newspaper publishers in this city. A man, for instance, who deals about the country whole cargoes of 'liquid poison,' debasing and ruining thousands every year, starts up and says to the printer, You shall not have my patronage unless you stop advertising for theatres and lotteries. The theatre manager withdraws his custom if his nauseating puff is not inserted daily, and the lottery vender has the effrontery to write you a letter that unless you proscribe such a man, or such a one, he will withdraw his, perhaps, more valuable custom. And the politician, with much more reason and justice, perhaps, will not tolerate for a single day that an editor should pre-

sume to speak his own opinion when opposed to that of his patron. To this intolerable censorship of the press we have no notion to submit. To be assailed, for the purpose of diverting a paper from a course dictated by duty and principle, with fears and motives so rank and unworthy, is too insulting and humiliating. Stop, if you please—but no threats, no screws."

All this *sounds* very well. But we would ask, why, only a few months ago, the *Correspondent* was denounced in the columns of this same *Advocate*, as a work so infamous that it ought to be *consigned to the flames*? What was this but an attempt to "proscribe" us; to put the "screws" on us; to introduce "an intolerable censorship of the press;" to assail us "for the purpose of diverting our paper from a course dictated by duty and principle." We readily exonerate the *present* editor of the *Advocate* from any participation in the mandate that doomed our journal, and (if carried the length which fanaticism would justify) would also have doomed ourselves, to the flames. He was not then concerned with the paper; and we should hope, from the tone of the article which we have quoted above, that he is as much disposed to concede to us, as he is to demand for himself, "the privilege of expressing decently, but decidedly and independently, our own opinions." But there is one point on which we presume some disagreement will arise betwixt us. He asserts that "Christianity is the religion of the land," a position which we conceive to be unfounded, and which it was our intention to show was the fact, when we first took up the pen, but which, from want of room, we are compelled to postpone till our next. 137

MISCELLANEOUS.

Marvellous Discoveries!—I have been much edified, says a late traveller in Italy, with my pilgrimage of the churches. First we saw, at the church of St. Ambrose, in Milan, the very identical gates which St. Ambrose himself shut in the face of Theodosius the Great, and refused him admittance, until he had expiated by a public penance the murder of the Thessalonians; nor was he admitted within them, till, prostrate in the dust, the humbled monarch, at the feet of the proud priest, before the assembled multitude, implored the pardon and absolution of his sins. Miraculous to relate, these gates were carved in wood in the ninth century, and the saint lived in the fourth. But, as the little man who showed them to us said, nothing is impossible. Then I made a most marvellous discovery for myself, in the old church of St. Eustorgio, (the most ancient of Milan,) of the tomb of the three Magi; which I maintain was my own discovery, because I never heard of it before, and have been able to find no account of it in any of the copious books of travels with which we are oppressed. And yet, such was my genius, that upon a huge urn of marble in that venerable church, I espied the inscription "Sepulchrum Trium Magorum;" which, on inquiry among the literati, I find is well known among them as the tomb of the three kings—though the literati knew nothing more about them. But, by industriously grubbing in the dust of antiquity, I have satisfactorily ascertained that the bodies

of the three kings were brought by St. Eustorgio himself out of Germany—[how they got to Germany the saint alone knows, for even the antiquarians don't]—in a car drawn by four oxen. But a tiger one night, in the black forest, ate up one of the oxen for his supper, and then, penitent for what he had done, put himself into harness instead of it. [The tiger should have been canonized.] He patiently helped the oxen and the saint to draw the three (dead) kings the whole way to this spot, when they suddenly grew refractory; and not one foot further could the tiger, the saint, or the oxen, make these obstinate three kings go,—so a church was built over them. But, after all, the defunct magi capriciously betook themselves to rambling again with an old archbishop of Cologne, who carried them off to Cologne without so much as a single beast to help him. But my discovery, sinner that I am! was nothing to the discovery made by St. Ambrose, of the holy curb, or bit, which he saw one day lying among a heap of old iron, upon the stall of an old iron merchant in the streets of Rome; and he knew it immediately, from the celestial light which shone upon it, though it had lain unsuspected for ages! This precious article is mounted in gold, enshrined in a box of rock crystal, and suspended amid gilded angels and seraphims, above the tribune of the high altar of the cathedral, so far beyond vulgar gaze that you cannot see it, except once a year on the 3d of May, when two cannons are sent up for it in a sort of car, raised by pulleys, in the same style as the heathen gods and goddesses are hoisted up and down at the opera house. It is then carried in procession about the streets, in memory of St. Carlo Borromeo's pilgrimage through the city, barefooted and barenecked, with a halter about his neck, and this holy bit in his hand, to stop the plague—which it did!

Removal.—The office of the *Correspondent* is removed to No. 15 Chamber street, near the Apprentices' Library, where all orders and communications are requested to be forwarded.

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